Tested in Times of Transition

Diplomatic Security | 2011 Year in Review
The Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS), the law enforcement and security arm of the U.S. Department of State, provides a secure environment for the conduct of American diplomacy. To advance American interests and foreign policy, DS protects people, property, and information at more than 280 State Department posts worldwide. DS is the most widely represented U.S. security and law enforcement organization in the world, and a leader in international investigations, threat analysis, cyber security, counterterrorism, and security technology.
Twenty-five years after the Bureau of Diplomatic Security was created from the U.S. Department of State’s Office of Security, the men and women of DS demonstrated quite clearly why this has become a premier U.S. federal law enforcement and security agency. Charged with responsibility for protecting United States diplomacy, the bureau has undergone tremendous growth since its founding in order to meet substantially expanded responsibilities domestically and in far-flung locations around the world. Today, DS foreign service and civil service officers, employees, and contractors live and work at more than 280 foreign missions in 162 countries.

The remarkable events of 2011 demanded and received the very best of Diplomatic Security. Tested directly and indirectly by epic transitions – including popular revolutions overseas and the withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Iraq – and by incidents of terrorism, natural disasters, document fraud, cyber intrusions, and drug cartel violence south of our border, our people have fulfilled their mission. In some locations, DS has taken on new roles and additional responsibility, with finite resources but unlimited energy, determination, and resourcefulness.

The 2011 “Arab Spring” movements had a profound impact on the geo-political, socio-economic, and security landscape of North Africa and the Middle East. Throughout the volatile period, DS agents performed a critical role in protecting U.S. government personnel, property, and information, providing secure operating platforms in tumultuous environments. Here at home, DS contended with a daunting range of criminal activity requiring extensive security responses.

Public respect for the bureau, its duties, and its people has brought a steady flow of applicants to our doors. And we are selective. In 2011, DS received approximately 5,000 applications for open positions. From these, DS hired 124 special agents, 54 security protective specialists, 24 security engineering officers, 17 security technical specialists, and six couriers.

DS has a track record that stands up impressively to that of any other federal law enforcement or security agency. Good people and dedicated teamwork – including cooperation across division boundaries and international borders when necessary – have made the difference. They will make all the difference in years to come, as well.

Eric J. Boswell
Assistant Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security
Director, Office of Foreign Missions
Diplomatic Security (DS) was seriously tested by global events in 2011, most notably and often unexpectedly by the historic “Arab Spring” developments in North Africa and the Middle East.

Dynamic forces of political and economic change produced epic transitions in national and regional environments, nowhere more dramatically than within states like Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Yemen, and Syria. DS coped with these and many other challenges in often dangerous and unstable locations, even while facing the impact of budget constraints brought on by adverse domestic and global economic circumstances.

Political instability and economic uncertainty transformed traditional political and social orders, power structures, and daily routines overseas. In order to meet these challenges, DS continued to adapt to meet ever-changing requirements for securing United States diplomacy around the world. It actively addressed new and evolving threats while planning for those yet over the horizon, both near-term and a decade into the future. Diplomatic Security must stay attuned to domestic conditions in nations where it serves, since instability impacts mission security and has wider implications for the international community.

Mass revolutionary movements on the scale observed across the Near East region in 2011 introduced new dimensions of unpredictability and risk into the existing security matrix for U.S. diplomatic personnel in multiple locations. Those challenges were individually evaluated and skillfully addressed by onsite DS teams as each new situation unfolded. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton noted: “At times, our embassies and ambassadors were the target of attacks...2011 demanded courage and resourcefulness
from our staff in many countries. [Yet they] rose to every occasion and refused to be intimidated.”

DS Regional Security Officers (RSOs) from Rabat to Manama – and everywhere in between – provided sound security advice, cool-headed leadership, and excellent reporting during a period of extraordinary turmoil and historic change. In Cairo and Tunis, DS special agents ensured the safety of hundreds of employees remaining at these U.S. Embassies in Ordered Departure status, amid weeks of public and sometimes violent demonstrations and historic changes in government. In Tripoli, the RSO staff helped oversee the safe departure of dozens of employees and dependents, and the complete suspension of the Embassy’s operations prior to the liberation of Libya in October. Meanwhile in Algeria, Yemen, Syria, Bahrain, and elsewhere, RSOs led Emergency Action Committees in fine-tuning mission contingency plans in tumultuous and uncertain climates.

Credit for Diplomatic Security’s success in the Middle East and beyond is due not only to the leadership of the RSOs, but also to the entire DS team as well: Mobile Security Deployments, headquarters desk officers, Command Center personnel, intelligence and threat analysts, security engineers and technicians, diplomatic couriers, Training Center trainers, Marine Security Guards, and many others. The DS Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), meanwhile, helped keep U.S. private sector interests within turbulent areas informed of rapidly changing political and security dynamics.

Whatever the range, degree, and location of international instability in the future, DS has demonstrated its ability to deal skillfully with any circumstances that arise.
**Tunis, Tunisia**

The DS response to the abrupt fall of Tunisia’s president in January was an impressive example of teamwork and coordination between bureau headquarters in Washington, D.C., and the RSO team in Tunis. Unprecedented events unfolded each hour with lightning speed, as the regime struggled to contain the popular revolution. DS Assistant Regional Security Officer (ARSO) special agents arrived from Rabat, Algiers, and Jerusalem to support U.S. Embassy Tunis operations during an Authorized Departure following the departure of the president from the country in mid-January. (Authorized Departure is an intermediate step in the events leading up to an Ordered Departure, or drawdown, of diplomatic mission personnel and their dependents whenever local situations are becoming unpredictable or unmanageable.)

For several weeks, the nation teetered on the brink of anarchy, as the entire national police force stood down and the undersized army attempted to regain civil control over a state of emergency and nationwide curfew. Mobs looted and burned stores, houses, and vehicles, while gunfire erupted nightly in neighborhoods where U.S. Embassy staff sheltered in place. Yet because of the immediate security assistance provided by these Assistant RSOs and a DS Mobile Security Deployments (MSD) team, Embassy operations never faltered despite the surrounding unrest. Marine Security Guards (MSG) monitored radio traffic and took hundreds of calls from panicked citizens of many countries, looking for guidance in the absence of a functioning Tunisian government.

The Emergency Action Committee (EAC) met twice daily; and RSO Tunis staff reported developments to DS and Department leadership via e-mail, cables, and conference calls. The RSO office maintained
all security operations for all staff and assisted with the Authorized Departure of a chartered aircraft loaded with approximately 100 U.S. citizens and staff dependents. The RSO team met with officials from other embassies and the private sector to discuss contingency strategies. When the security situation eventually stabilized, the RSO team provided guidance, equipment, and personnel as the American School became the first to reopen in the country. For MSD there was no rest, as the team soon was mobilized to move on to Cairo and the next phase of Arab Spring developments.

Cairo, Egypt

Inspired by activity in neighboring Tunisia, street protests erupted in Cairo’s Tahrir Square in late January, seriously challenging Egypt’s longtime government and national security. When host-nation police became unable to guarantee safety for diplomats, U.S. Embassy Cairo’s DS Regional Security Office implemented emergency security measures to keep the Embassy safe.

The Embassy’s EAC met numerous times in mid-to-late January to address the emerging breakdown in civil order that dominated Cairo. Under normal staffing, Embassy Cairo’s RSO team is staffed with nine DS special agents. But as civil unrest grew, ARSOs from Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Abu Dhabi, and Muscat arrived to assist RSO Cairo.

Cairo had turned into a war zone, and at times, the situation was perilous for the U.S. Embassy team. Its diplomatic vehicles were targeted and attacked...
by angry mobs with knives, swords, and various homemade weapons. There were several close calls where U.S. mission personnel barely escaped the attacks, and they did so only after sustaining significant and potentially debilitating damage to the armored vehicles, including broken windows, flattened tires, and body damage. U.S. personnel also had some close calls at the U.S. Embassy. With the potential for grave consequences, the RSO enforced strict procedures for anyone moving about the compound, including some areas where only limited personnel with RSO approval and mandatory ballistic protection were permitted.

DS also dispatched two Mobile Security Deployments teams. One MSD team from Washington, D.C., and a second team already mobilized in nearby Tunis arrived in Cairo on January 31, to assist host-nation military, the Embassy local guard force, and mobile patrol units in securing the U.S. Mission compound and U.S. diplomatic residences. Overall coordination was a major challenge, with MSD forces posted at five separate locations around the city. But excellent teamwork support along with the RSO team met the challenge.

On January 31, the Department authorized voluntary departures for U.S. Embassy Cairo staff and eligible family members; but within 24 hours, as violence intensified, Embassy Cairo moved to mandatory Ordered Departure status. Under RSO protection operating full-time at the Cairo airport, some 700 Embassy staff and family members, and approximately 3,000 non-government U.S. citizens, were safely
evacuated on commercial and chartered aircraft. They were sent to evacuation points in Greece, Cyprus, Turkey, and Germany, where fellow DS special agents and other Department staff arranged onward travel to final destinations.

After Egypt’s president resigned on February 11, the RSO and MSD teams joined in providing security support for visits by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and two Congressional delegations that arrived in Cairo to assess the situation, on three separate occasions, including walks by these U.S. officials through tumultuous Tahrir Square.

Throughout the crisis, the capable RSO team relied upon essential support from its DS mobile patrol units, local guard force, locally employed staff police liaisons and investigators, and the surveillance detection team.

With the complete dismantlement and breakdown of the host government, the only reliable resources were those of the DS mission team itself and key external DS assets, including those at other U.S. posts and at bureau headquarters. Overall teamwork, close coordination, and onsite leadership proved to be the critical elements for maintaining a safe environment for Embassy Cairo during this difficult time. As an RSO team member put it later, “We were a family taking care of our own.”

**Manama, Bahrain**

Shortly after Egyptian protesters took to Cairo’s Tahrir Square, widespread demonstrations broke out in Manama on February 14. Over the next four weeks, Bahraini security forces engaged demonstrators, and armor was deployed on the streets of Manama. Widespread protests continued to rage for a month; and on March 13, U.S. Embassy Bahrain requested Authorized Departure status. In the rapidly unfolding circumstances, prompt and continuous reporting by the three RSO Manama special agents enabled the State Department to remain fully informed and make timely policy decisions.

The RSO team also coordinated the deployment of a U.S. Marine Corps Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team (FAST) to the U.S. Embassy, moved Embassy staff and family members to the airport for departure, and continuously provided timely information and guidance to remaining U.S. mission personnel, OSAC members, and to other nations’ embassies.
During the crisis, RSO Manama fully integrated senior U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) leadership into the Embassy’s emergency planning and actions. As a result, the U.S. Navy’s Central Command headquarters in Bahrain aligned its security posture and travel guidance for its 9,000 personnel and dependents with that of the U.S. Embassy. Throughout, RSO Manama monitored over 400 demonstrations and published over 150 warden and demonstration notices to the resident U.S. citizen community. The office’s dedication and tireless efforts prevented widespread panic and kept U.S. citizens safe.

**Tripoli, Libya**

The first popular demonstrations in Libya against the regime of longtime leader Muammar Qadhafi were reported on February 16. By February 20, U.S. Embassy Tripoli reported the situation in that city had significantly deteriorated; and the next day the Department authorized Ordered Departure for all official U.S. personnel and their family members.

In response to the crisis, the Department activated an around-the-clock Libya Task Force, staffed with DS desk officers in Washington, D.C. Through e-mail, cables, and twice-daily conference calls with U.S. Embassies in Tripoli and designated safe-haven posts in Malta and Turkey, the Task Force assisted in coordinating the evacuation of U.S. citizens and official personnel out of Libya.

Given the lack of space on commercial flights, the Department chartered a commercial ferry from Malta to conduct the primary evacuation from Tripoli. DS dispatched two ARSOs from Rome to Malta, where they boarded the ferry bound for Tripoli. Meanwhile,
the three-person RSO team in Tripoli, supported by local staff employees, moved departing U.S. personnel and their dependents to the port to meet the ferry upon its arrival February 23, providing liaison with Libyan authorities and assisting the evacuation of other U.S. citizens and third-country nationals. Efficiently and safely, they supervised the loading of some 296 passengers, including 169 U.S. citizens, 40 of whom were official U.S. personnel and family. Other passengers included British, Australian, French, Canadian, and Maltese nationals. Once loaded, the ferry was unable to depart for two days, due to severe weather. But with the assistance of the two ARSOs from Rome, RSO personnel remained at the port until the ferry embarked for Malta, where it arrived without incident and was met by the RSO and other U.S. Embassy Valletta staff who assisted in off-loading and clearing passengers through customs.

After seeing to the loading of the ferry, RSO Tripoli supervised the emergency destruction of all sensitive items at the Embassy and coordinated with the Task Force to schedule a charter flight from Turkey to evacuate remaining U.S. officials from Libya. The RSO team moved departing U.S. personnel to the airport to meet the plane, and assisted in evacuating an additional 13 U.S. citizens.

On February 25, the Government of Libya was advised that U.S. Embassy Tripoli had suspended operations due to the deteriorating security environment; and soon after, a full-scale civil war gripped the nation for several months. Nevertheless, the DS local guard force remained at the post, providing daily reports at significant risk to themselves and their families until May 1, when the Embassy grounds were overrun by a mob of pro-Qadhafi forces and looters.

Even before U.S. Embassy Tripoli was evacuated, DS was actively looking, along with the Department’s Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, for a secure location where the Department could safely conduct diplomacy in Libya. As the standoff between rebels and pro-Qadhafi forces ensued, DS deployed a team to Benghazi to help move the Department’s diplomatic presence and establish new offices and residences in a temporary location.

The DS team made an ongoing evaluation of the temporary location’s security, implemented upgrades, and proceeded to identify an even more secure location. Due to existing and emerging threats, Department personnel were moved by DS to the more secure location, a large villa compound that significantly enhanced the security of all U.S. personnel in Benghazi.
DS made valuable contributions to the Department’s successful and rapid return of a diplomatic presence to Tripoli after the fall of Qadhafi. As the Department moved to re-establish Embassy Tripoli and work with the country’s new leadership during an uncertain transitional period, DS built a security infrastructure to support the mission with characteristic determination, initiative, and professionalism. DS Mobile Security Deployments special agents were the first Department employees to return to Tripoli, and they quickly paved the way for others. Their liaison with other U.S. federal agencies and the establishment of contacts with key rebel commanders helped ensure that the U.S. Embassy was established quickly and safely. Early on, a joint DS and Overseas Buildings Operations team conducted reconnaissance and an initial security assessment for Tripoli. The joint team identified the potential site for the new U.S. Embassy, and DS established critical physical security countermeasures that will be incorporated into the future U.S. Embassy Tripoli security upgrade project. After most U.S. mission personnel arrived, the DS MSD team applied its skills to help integrate a DoD support team into Embassy operations, protect a host of senior State Department officials visitors, and evacuate the wounded from Tripoli for medical attention. On September 22, the DS MSD team proudly raised the flag at the newly established U.S. Embassy in a free Libya.

**Sanaa, Yemen**

The Yemeni government’s crackdowns on Arab Spring protesters in February gradually turned nationwide civil disobedience into open warfare between various tribal and break-away government factions, mostly
within the capital city of Sanaa. In response to events, the U.S. Embassy transitioned from Authorized to Ordered Departure status for several months.

Fighting began to affect all routes between mission housing and the U.S. Embassy, requiring relocation of all mission personnel to a hotel in the Embassy neighborhood. The evacuation of staff housing took place amid fierce gunfire between diverse factions vying for power in the city. With very limited resources and staff, the Regional Security Office, in coordination with MSD and DoD personnel, successfully moved over 100 persons into the hotel within hours.

The RSO team set up a large number of physical security improvements at the hotel in a matter of days, retained the FAST Marine Platoon after the expiration of the Ordered Departure status, and contracted with an armed security company to further protect the hotel. The DS team continued to maintain, upgrade, and manage the enormously complex security operation that linked the hotel to the Embassy, and to provide security for the U.S. Mission and visiting U.S. officials.

When events led Yemen’s president to step down late in the year, the country remained in a very precarious position, with Sanaa still divided between heavily armed rival factions engaged in fighting. Embassy personnel remained on very restricted movements and were unable to return to their houses. Meanwhile the RSO worked constantly to mitigate threats against the U.S. Chief of Mission who met daily with all key players, permitting diplomacy and negotiations to proceed in a virtual war zone.
Against this backdrop, the RSO and rotating MSD teams trained over 50 armed security escorts for staff shuttle security – a new reality of working in Yemen – and took part in substantial efforts leading to release of two dozen armored vehicles held by Yemeni customs officials for well over a year. MSD completed a year-and-a-half of service to Embassy Sanaa, bolstering the Regional Security Office’s ability to address threats from al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula in the midst of the popular revolution. MSD transitioned smoothly from providing direct security support to mission personnel during the crisis, to the multi-faceted training role.

DAMASCUS, SYRIA

U.S.-Syrian relations became contentious within the context of Arab Spring political turmoil elsewhere. Tensions erupted on July 11, when a large crowd gathered at the U.S. Embassy in Damascus and, within minutes, 50 protesters climbed the diplomatic compound’s perimeter walls. The mission’s Local Guard Force reacted dutifully, and all mission personnel were directed to safe havens in the compound as protesters smashed cameras, broke forced-entry ballistic-resistant windows, climbed on the roof, and attempted to set the post on fire. If not for the sound judgment of the DS RSO as Embassy employees remained secure inside the chancery,
lives would have been in danger. Constant RSO communication with the DS Command Center in Washington, D.C., enabled headquarters to monitor the situation, keeping senior Department leadership informed and U.S. Embassy staff safe.

Then on September 29, the U.S. Ambassador, a senior Embassy political officer, and a DS agent were assaulted by 10 to 20 persons as they arrived for a scheduled meeting in Damascus. The assailants, lying in wait for the Ambassador’s arrival, began shouting, spitting, and throwing tomatoes and eggs at the Americans. The DS agent reacted immediately as trained, covering the Ambassador and political officer, and directing them to an interior space inside the adjacent building. The Ambassador was hit in the back with an object, while the DS agent bore the brunt of thrown items and was spat upon several times.

From the Embassy, a retrieval team composed of another DS agent, a Foreign Service National Investigator, and additional members of the Ambassador’s Protective Detail rushed to the scene. After some delay, the RSO was able to gain the cooperation of Syrian police forces; and the Embassy retrieval team entered the area and evacuated the Ambassador and his two Embassy colleagues from the building, returning safely to the Embassy. Throughout the extremely dangerous and volatile event, the RSO Damascus team successfully protected the targeted U.S. Ambassador and other diplomatic personnel.

The U.S. mission remained in peril throughout the remainder of the year.

**Related Domestic Challenges**

The Arab Spring transition events presented challenges for DS domestically as well. For example, the bureau worked to ensure the safe transfer of Libyan Embassy property in the United States to the newly recognized government in Tripoli. At the same time, DS had to address increased concerns from the Syrian and Egyptian Embassies over public demonstrations and threats targeting their personnel and facilities in this country, due to the upheaval overseas. Under the vigilance of DS protective liaison personnel, the embassies and staff of North African and Middle East countries situated in Washington, D.C., remained safe and secure throughout the turbulent year.
Security for U.S. Officials

Diplomatic Security special agents are responsible for protecting U.S. government officials at home and abroad, and certain foreign dignitaries and official guests when they are in the United States. These protection responsibilities span the globe. Extensive planning, analysis, and coordination with local, state, federal, and foreign law enforcement and security partners is critical to ensuring that appropriate security measures are in place. During 2011, DS successfully protected 173 visiting foreign officials at 278 U.S. city stops, for a combined total of 1,273 calendar days.

Some officials, like U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador Susan Rice, have permanently assigned DS protective details. In 2011, DS agents protected Ambassador Rice both at home and abroad, in countries including Canada, Italy, Finland, Libya, Rwanda, South Africa, and South Sudan.

Meanwhile, Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton continued to set records for travel by visiting 45 countries, logging more than 237,000 miles. Her DS protective detail accompanied her the entire way, sometimes augmented by MSD team members, providing a secure environment within which the Secretary and her staff could safely conduct U.S. diplomacy.

Occasionally, a trip will require an unprecedented amount of creativity, teamwork, and determination to achieve a safe and successful mission. For example, the Secretary’s historic trip to Burma in November was the first such visit in more than 50 years. The unfamiliar operating environment, with its potential cultural and political barriers, presented real challenges; yet these challenges were met with usual DS persistence, tact, and skill. Successfully negotiated security arrangements enabled the Secretary to engage with Burmese officials as well as with the noted Burmese political opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.
One of the most complex security challenges presented to the Secretary’s Detail was her equally historic and ground-breaking trip to Libya in October, after the fall of the Qadhafi regime. The transitional operating environment in Tripoli was turbulent and unpredictable. DS advance team agents engaged in delicate negotiations with local militia, and quickly coordinated a diverse security team of quick-reaction forces, a tactical operations center, casualty evacuation planners, and DoD assets pre-positioned off the coast of Tripoli. Her DS protective detail then safely escorted the Secretary and her party into the country, where she was able to raise the level of U.S. government contact with that nation’s fledgling freedom initiative.

DS also protected the U.S. Special Representative to the Libyan Transitional National Council, John Christopher Stevens, during the height of the crisis. That mission required DS special agents to operate for five months in rebel-held Benghazi, in the midst of the civil war, evolving from a small mission of limited duration into an extensive mission focused on critical political reporting and humanitarian assistance.

Protection in High-Threat Environments

Diplomatic Security was tested throughout 2011 by a series of events in Pakistan with political and security implications, including the surprise assault on Osama bin Laden’s secret compound in May, and a November incident resulting in the death of 24 Pakistani soldiers.
Strains in bilateral diplomatic relations presented special challenges for routine RSO operational duties and procedures.

In Iraq, as the transition from U.S. military forces to a civilian-led relationship unfolded, DS took unprecedented steps through the Regional Security Office in Baghdad to protect and support the expanded U.S. diplomatic presence. The historic transfer of responsibility from military to diplomatic operations was the largest such endeavor by the State Department since the implementation of the Marshall Plan in Europe following World War II.

The intensive U.S. engagement with Iraq will continue in the full range of political and economic programs, security support, and other areas. The U.S.-Iraq relationship remains extremely important; and the number of U.S. diplomats, security trainers, Agency for International Development workers, and commercial exchange officers, among others, place this mission on par with other major U.S. diplomatic posts. In fact, the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad is comparable to some of our largest embassies around the world.

The strategic challenge facing DS as the transition process unfolded in 2011 was to integrate many of the security responsibilities and services of departing U.S. military forces, while simultaneously securing Chief of Mission facilities, and assistance and reconstruction programs, under difficult and dangerous conditions throughout the country. Building on the extraordinary security measures that have been in place in Iraq for a number of years, existing capabilities like protective security details for all U.S. mission personnel, ground and air emergency response, electronic tracking and locating devices, and the Tactical Operations Center were strengthened and expanded. To lead and manage this effort, DS expanded to 171 bureau positions in Iraq.

Central to this effort was preserving functions critical to security. DoD transferred, loaned, or sold to the State Department both military and non-military equipment essential to mission security and basic life support services. Several critical security functions were added to RSO programs, including Sense-and-Warn systems, Mine-Resistant Ambush Protection vehicles, explosive ordnance disposal, and other capabilities. As a result DS, through RSO Baghdad, now leads an ongoing U.S. diplomatic security program in Iraq with the capacity to operate, sustain, and preserve existing capabilities using sophisticated systems and technologies.

At the same time, Department-wide planning for the forthcoming 2014 Afghanistan transition began in earnest during 2011. The DS effort includes establishing a plan for construction security, and for identifying and quantifying future transition security requirements.
Taliban insurgents nearly a kilometer away from the heavily fortified Embassy compound directed a barrage of rocket and machine gun fire against the U.S. Mission and NATO headquarters nearby. The alert RSO security team, positioned to provide early warning for just such an attack, took action within seconds to activate an alarm notifying everyone in the Embassy of the impending threat – the most direct attack on the mission since it re-opened ten years earlier. Embassy staffers hurriedly took cover behind sandbag walls and within hardened buildings. RSO personnel, as trained, moved quickly to rooftops and other critical positions to counter a possible ground attack and to help direct Embassy personnel to safety.

As the day-long assault ensued, a large contingent of DS special agents braved heavy fire and covered several hundred meters of exposed ground to reinforce the threatened perimeter. Throughout the gun battle between entrenched insurgents and Afghan police, military, and International Security Assistance Forces, RSO Kabul evacuated several hundred construction workers from the line of fire, reinforced the compound’s gates and walls, and safeguarded the multiple Embassy officers situated throughout Kabul. Late into the night and early the next morning, work continued to locate and diffuse unexploded rockets scattered around the compound. The extraordinarily brave and selfless acts of RSO Kabul’s DS special agents, Security Protective Specialists, and security contractors safeguarded lives and the integrity of the compound.

Less than two weeks later, on September 25, a lone Afghan attacker inside a U.S. Embassy Kabul annex killed an American staff employee and wounded three other Americans in a hail of gunfire. Although the threat was quickly neutralized by security forces, the incident produced a complex crime scene investigation. Armed with the latest investigative training and equipment, the RSO Kabul team was critical in gathering evidence and conducting interviews as part of the overall investigative process.
During 2011, Diplomatic Security transitioned from the previous Worldwide Personal Protective Services II contract to the new Worldwide Protective Services (WPS) contract for utilizing private contractor security services to assist in securing America’s vital strategic interests in Iraq and Afghanistan in coming years. Congressional authority allowing DS to use best-value principles helps to ensure future quality in the WPS award process, as it examines specific key metrics such as a bidder’s past performance, personnel staffing capacity, and training capabilities.

DS also has played a key role working with several offices across the U.S. government on the development of the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICoC). This is an international initiative to raise the standards of private security companies operating in complex environments around the world. Over 300 such companies have signed the ICoC, including many that contract with the U.S. government in places like Iraq and Afghanistan. Coupled with credible independent mechanisms for governance and oversight, the ICoC will help assess compliance with good practices for the industry. DS oversight programs currently incorporate the principles outlined by the ICoC; and it is working to ensure this initiative serves as a credible tool for identifying responsible security contractors.

Personnel Recovery (PR) has become an integral part of many high-threat security programs, as DS has developed strategies to prevent, prepare for, and respond to incidents of U.S. citizens isolated abroad, to include being taken hostage. The DS-led State Department PR program has grown considerably in the past year. It now includes coordinators working in Mexico, Iraq, and Afghanistan, supporting national security policy goals to prevent U.S. hostage incidents and to recover U.S. citizens if they become isolated or missing. In partnership with the Diplomatic Security Training Center and the U.S. Agency for International Development, over 100 personnel from DOS and other government agencies were trained in personnel recovery management during the year.

In 2011, DS Mobile Security Deployments personnel responded to the U.S. mission in Mexico as it struggled against threats and incidents from cartels bent on smuggling drugs to the United States. U.S. Consulates on the northern border faced serious threats as they worked to push back the tide of the cartels which have become increasingly lethal and brazenly threaten U.S. federal agencies. With relatively small RSO teams spread out across the Mexican
nation, MSD was dispatched to provide practical training specifically tailored to address these threats.

MSD assisted RSOs in implementing law enforcement best practices, including the creation of a PR program in Mexico. MSD also developed a training program specifically addressing threats faced by those federal agencies that are required to travel into remote regions of Mexico to conduct law enforcement investigations and counter-drug operations.

Safety in Special Circumstances

On March 11, a 9.0 earthquake and subsequent aftershocks and tsunamis shook the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Reactor in northern Japan and created a catastrophe of unprecedented magnitude and complexity for the U.S. mission in that country. DS immediately orchestrated Emergency Task Force support in Washington, D.C.; provided temporary duty staff support for RSO Tokyo; and initiated the disbursement of emergency funding and equipment for the RSO to help manage the ongoing crisis. DS provided daily guidance to the RSO staff for safeguarding mission personnel and private U.S. citizens, facilitating their safe evacuation from Japan.

Simultaneously, DS sent three of its experts in weapons-of-mass-destruction technology to provide around-the-clock technical guidance to the U.S. mission, as well as new state-of-the-art radiation detection equipment to support the Embassy. One concern was possible contamination of the mission compound. The DS technical specialists provided hand-held radiation detectors and monitored the use of other detection devices to determine if U.S. mission personnel had been exposed and contaminated.
Following a historic popular referendum in January supporting South Sudan’s independence, Diplomatic Security led efforts in support of U.S. foreign policy objectives by ensuring that security, safety, and resource concerns were met as the Juba Consulate was converted into the U.S. Embassy for South Sudan. In an extremely tense transitional climate with the potential for conflict in a number of regions, DS facilitated the successful deployment of U.S. government personnel throughout South Sudan.

During October and November, DS coordinated the unified U.S. government security support for the 2011 Pan American Games and ParaPan Games in Mexico, which brought an estimated 3 million visitors to competition venues in Guadalajara and five outlying cities, hundreds of miles apart. Diplomatic Security’s events coordination specialists directed the participation of 11 other U.S. government agencies, and worked with the DS Antiterrorism Assistance program (ATA) to provide tactical management of special events and national leadership protection training to Mexican law enforcement and security officials. The Pan American Games was the first major international sporting event to occur after the signing of a cooperation agreement between DS and the U.S. Olympic Committee, and following the signing of the charter for the International Security Events Group, the U.S. government’s integrated security planning body for major events.

The 63 special agents deployed to the Games helped support U.S. public and private sector interests, while...
serving as field liaison officers and watch officers at 45 competition venues, within the athletes’ village, in Mexican command centers, and in the U.S. inter-agency Joint Operations Center. In addition to being responsible for 600 U.S. athletes and 500 support staff, DS assisted with logistics for an official White House delegation, hundreds of U.S. media representatives, and thousands of American fans.

DS agents also worked with U.S. Embassy Berlin to provide DS field liaison officer support for the FIFA Women’s World Cup in Germany during June and July. The U.S. team played in six cities and advanced to the final match in Frankfurt.

Safeguarding Foreign Officials

Certain visiting foreign dignitaries and other officials are protected by DS special agents while in the United States. In July, DS protected Great Britain’s royal newlyweds Prince William and Catherine, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, during their three-day visit to California. Heavy media attention and record crowds accompanied the visit. DS worked closely with state and local law enforcement, and other public safety partners, to craft and implement appropriate measures to address security concerns associated with the trip.
Meanwhile, security for the annual United Nations General Assembly opening session in New York City – the largest DS protective detail assignment – began in mid-September, after months of planning and staffing. Nearly 530 Diplomatic Security agents – together with 120 agents from the U.S. Marshals Service and the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives – participated in some 40 protective details during the two-week event. MSD deployed three teams to New York City in support of the United Nations event. In addition, close to 70 DS uniformed security officers assisted with protection, manning security posts at designated facilities around the city.

Autumn’s schedule also brought the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Senior Officials Meeting in San Francisco, California, and subsequent APEC Leaders’ Week in Honolulu, Hawaii. DS developed the security plan for the San Francisco event and was responsible for overseeing protective operations; while during the APEC Leaders’ Week, DS staffed 17 protective details, sharing overall responsibility with the U.S. Secret Service.

The DS New York Field Office supported 103 protective assignments for foreign dignitary visits during the course of the year, also supporting 14 visits by the Secretary of State. The office regularly...
provides diplomatic and protective liaison service to over 300 foreign missions and consulates in the New York area, responding to nearly 100 demonstrations against foreign missions in 2011, and assisting some 400 instances of dignitary travel to or through the New York City area. After the October death of Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince in a New York City hospital, for example, New York field agents led a massive effort involving multiple federal, state, and local entities to ensure proper handling of the highly sensitive situation.

On a routine basis, Diplomatic Security also provides security and law enforcement assistance to over 185 foreign embassies and international organizations located in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area; and it responded to more than 2,200 requests for assistance in 2011.

DS also assisted the 150 members of the foreign Diplomatic Corps during several high-profile events, including President Barack Obama’s State of the Union Address, the memorial service for U.S. Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, and during Diplomatic Corps visits to Alaska and New Orleans under the Department’s “Experience America” program.

Office of Foreign Missions

Pursuant to the requirements of the Foreign Missions Act, the Office of Foreign Missions (OFM) has four primary roles: (1) to regulate the activities of foreign missions in the United States and its territories in a manner that will protect the foreign policy and national interests of the United States; (2) to use reciprocity as a means to adjust for costs and procedures faced by U.S. diplomatic missions abroad; (3) to protect the U.S. public from abuses of diplomatic and consular privileges and immunities; and (4) to provide services and assistance to the foreign mission community in the United States. OFM facilitates a safer environment for the conduct of American diplomacy abroad by ensuring that foreign mission members in the United States receive the appropriate level of privileges and protections.

OFM is represented through its six Regional Offices located in Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, and San Francisco. Regional Offices extend the Department’s reach to local and state governmental partners and serve the growing consular and
international community outside the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. Local partnerships established by OFM Regional Offices benefit the United States government by advancing foreign policy interests and providing access to the foreign mission community for U.S. local and state authorities.

As leader of the Department’s Diplomatic Tax-Relief Initiative, OFM established or assisted in implementing bilateral arrangements for the relief of foreign taxes imposed on the construction of nine State Department facilities overseas for which contracts were awarded in 2011. These bilateral arrangements resulted in a total projected savings to the U.S. taxpayer of approximately $33 million in foreign taxes. Since 2005, OFM’s efforts have led to the establishment of 77 construction tax-relief arrangements, thus far resulting in savings of $220 million and projected to yield total cost savings in excess of $330 million.

Recent regional OFM efforts also have uncovered over $100,000 in taxes owed to state and local tax authorities by individuals improperly claiming to be active foreign consular officers with tax-free benefits.

OFM regional offices routinely facilitate foreign investment and development of new international trading partners by successfully linking foreign investors and consulates to U.S. stakeholders in host cities across the country. For example, OFM proactively arranges briefings to foreign businesses and government delegations at the Port of Houston, a primary economy engine for Houston, Texas. Operating revenue for the Houston Port Authority set a new record in 2011 at $204 million.

By issuing and enforcing driver’s license, registration, and insurance requirements to foreign diplomatic and consular missions in the United States, OFM’s Diplomatic Motor Vehicle Office ensures that foreign diplomats and missions carry federally mandated levels of liability insurance while also addressing issues associated with diplomats who commit motor-vehicle infractions. To prevent unauthorized use of Department of State-issued diplomatic driver’s licenses, OFM designed a new highly-secure driver’s license in 2011, with features enabling more rapid and reliable authentication by local public safety officers. And to protect against fraud or forgery, the diplomatic tax-exemption card also was re-designed by OFM in 2011 to incorporate up-to-date security features.
It was rated among the strongest of tornados, with winds in excess of 200 miles per hour. Within 48 hours of the storm, Diplomatic Security dispatched an emergency response team that included OFM, to assist foreign consulates in accounting for and identifying their citizens affected by the tornado.

Initially comprised of officers from the OFM Regional Offices in Chicago and Miami, and an agent from the DS Resident Office in St. Louis, the team’s mission was to serve as a crucial link between foreign consulate officials seeking information and the U.S. emergency response agencies working the site of the disaster.

Joplin and the surrounding area are home to a sizable population of foreign nationals and foreign-born U.S. citizens. OFM staff identified contacts at key emergency response agencies setting up operations in Joplin – including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Red Cross, and the Department of Health and Human Services – and also secured workspace for the DS team in a FEMA emergency response vehicle.

By the time the Department ended its mission in Joplin on June 1, DS had assisted the consulates of Brazil, Chile, China, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Japan, Mexico, Philippines, and Vietnam in accounting for their citizens. Six foreign nationals were confirmed dead, and many more lost their homes or other property.
Securing Domestic Facilities

Diplomatic Security is responsible for controlling access to the State Department’s approximately 120 domestic facilities and ad hoc venues hosting Department events. In order to do so, it produced nearly 21,400 employee and contractor building access cards in 2011. In support of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meetings, DS also produced and distributed more than 14,000 event-specific security credentials.

In 2011, DS coordinated security for 1,983 events attended by 93,284 guests at Department headquarters and Blair House in Washington, D.C., with the direct participation of its uniformed protective security team. These events included:

- Kennedy Center Honors reception
- State luncheons for the Presidents of South Korea and China
- Observance of the 50th anniversary of the Diplomatic Reception Rooms
- Global Chiefs of Mission Conference
- U.S. - India Forum, an event hosted by Deputy U.S. Secretary of State Thomas R. Nides and attended by the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, the Indian Finance Minister, and the U.S. Trade Representative

In October, DS uniformed security officers assumed responsibility for security operations at the Denver Federal Center, the largest concentration of U.S. federal agencies outside of the nation’s capital.

Meanwhile, the bureau’s Explosive Detection Dog (EDD) team training and testing standards were upgraded as EDD security teams deployed more often in support of the Secretary’s travels overseas, including Greece, India, the Dominican Republic, Uzbekistan, and Burma in 2011.
Thwarting Risks Abroad

The Marine Security Guard (MSG) program supports U.S. diplomatic missions globally by ensuring the protection of classified material and internal security. The important longstanding relationship between the United States Marine Corps and the Department was strengthened in 2011 through the completion of the second phase of a new state-of-the-art training academy at Quantico Marine Base in Virginia. In addition, the State Department and the Marine Corps activated four new Marine Security Guard Detachments in Dubai, Ouagadougou, Djibouti, and Mumbai, increasing the total number of MSG Detachments to 154. The Marine Security Guard program was featured in a DS-designed exhibit at the National Museum of the Marine Corps, in Triangle, Virginia, from October through December; the temporary exhibit later moved to the Department of State Exhibit Hall.

Post Security Program Reviews (PSPRs) are an essential component of DS management oversight of Regional Security Offices at all U.S. missions. The reviews are conducted to ensure that life safety, emergency preparedness, and information security programs are well managed with full mission support and participation, adequate personnel, sufficient resources, and appropriate management controls. In 2011, DS inspection teams conducted 91 post reviews throughout the world.

The **DS Command Center** (DSCC) plays a critical role in ensuring that DS and Department leadership are well informed of timely security situations around the globe. The DSCC performed a significant role in coordinating both immediate and long-term support in response to the attacks on U.S. Embassies Kabul and Damascus, the evacuation and return of U.S. diplomats to Tripoli, and security of U.S. diplomatic facilities during the Arab Spring uprisings. The DS Command Center also provided over 175 briefings to offices within the Department of State, to the U.S. inter-agency community, and to foreign governments. Alternate command centers were managed by DSCC staff in support of the UNGA session and APEC conference in the fall. The Command Center
also hosted the television program “America’s Most Wanted” during filming of an episode within the DSCC highlighting accomplishments of the Diplomatic Security Service.

The DS Command Center expanded its broad technical support capabilities to better monitor and rapidly respond to routine and emergency situations at 253 U.S. diplomatic facilities, and to monitor and respond to more than 3,000 personnel emergency tracking devices in the most critical locations throughout the world where Chief of Mission personnel operate.

Improving Physical Security Assets

Major improvements to physical protection of State Department facilities worldwide are achieved through engineering and security technology upgrades to existing technical security systems. In 2011, DS exceeded its enhancement goals, completing 26 full technical security upgrades; supporting 14 security management integration installations; and installing enhanced access control systems at U.S. missions in Islamabad, Lahore, and Peshawar, Pakistan – just to name a few. DS also completed 39 surveys and 35 designs, and shipped 44 packages of technical security systems project materials. DS technical security staff also provided installation, design, and engineering support to the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations for numerous projects. And DS has begun deploying a new high-security alarm system for U.S. diplomatic posts abroad.

DS also has made major strides in adapting military technologies for peace-time use. For example, DS experts in technical security have realized significant advances in personnel-tracking, utilizing new inter-operable tracking technologies for use across multiple federal agencies and multiple satellite networks.
DS remains committed to using the latest technologies to support the safety and security of the Department’s contingency operations in high-threat areas. Bureau security technology specialists are at the forefront of this support, fielding complex systems to support diplomacy in unsafe environments.

DS is partnering with U.S. Special Operations Command on the use and deployment of electronic countermeasures systems in DS vehicles used in Iraq and Afghanistan, providing significant improvements in protection against radio frequency-detonated improvised explosive devices. DS has also coordinated with DoD on the Sense-and-Warn system in Iraq, to provide early warning for indirect fire attacks.

In 2011, DS technical security capabilities supported RSO teams throughout Arab Spring venues, providing physical protection, early alerts, and the ability to sound emergency warnings when working beyond U.S. mission walls. DS countermeasures personnel worked throughout the year to improve perimeter security, provide increasingly sophisticated equipment, and execute well-designed systems to ensure optimal protection at U.S. missions in troubled areas.

U.S. Navy Seabees have a longstanding agreement with DS to assist with certain security projects and programs at U.S. embassies and consulates. In 2011, these included short periods of Navy Seabees service in Baghdad to install, repair, and maintain mobile surveillance equipment in 495 armored vehicles throughout Iraq. Seabees also assist the U.S. Mission in Kabul, supporting efforts in the mobile surveillance installation, repair, and maintenance program.

DS continued to expand the Security Management System enterprise (SMSe), a worldwide network connecting technical systems for remote monitoring. The SMSe has become a key security tool for providing Department security and management personnel with the video information for U.S. missions monitored by the DS Command Center.

In 2011, the bureau completed installation of access control and card-issuance stations at all U.S. Passport Centers. The State Department entered into agreements with the DoD to develop interoperability by 2013 between the DoD controlled-access identification card and the State Department’s Homeland Security-compliant cards, through testing and cooperation.

DS has a substantial role in the security of personnel within the United States, as well. DS teams manage physical security upgrades at more than 140 Department locations within the United States. In the domestic security arena, DS replaced numerous pieces of perimeter protection equipment; and three projects to provide technical security countermeasures at the National Passport Center (NPC) also were completed.
Diplomatic Courier Service

The DS Diplomatic Courier Service continued to provide reliable, secure transportation and delivery of classified information and materials to and from U.S. diplomatic missions, notwithstanding transitional crosscurrents abroad. The Courier Service’s prime directive has remained the same throughout its long history: to ensure absolute inviolability of the contents of the diplomatic pouch. Outside Washington, D.C., headquarters, 103 couriers are assigned to four regional divisions and six hub offices located throughout the world.

Diplomatic Couriers spent 77,900 hours on the road in 2011, securely transporting more than 9.5 million pounds of classified diplomatic pouch material. Traveling day and night, every day of the year, they delivered these secure materials by those means of transport providing greatest benefit at lowest cost. Supporting the Secretary of State’s extensive worldwide travel in 2011, DS couriers moved related sensitive support equipment without incident and within the time-sensitive demands of the Secretary’s schedule. Whether by land, sea, or air, all U.S. government pouches were delivered safely, securely, and on time.

DS couriers delivered between 13,000 to 22,000 pounds of classified diplomatic pouches on every chartered flight to Baghdad in 2011, working with a partner agency at U.S. Consulate General Frankfurt. The unprecedented chartered flight arrangement between U.S. agencies produced cost-savings of $1.2 million in 2011.

The Frankfurt-based corps of traveling couriers continued racking up additional successes against long odds, in an especially volatile area of the world – including establishing routine diplomatic courier pouch exchanges on the cargo tarmac in the United Arab Emirates, and overcoming Egyptian Customs obstacles in order to service U.S. Embassy Cairo. The Courier Service also managed to re-establish a successful visa process for diplomatic couriers entering that country.
Airport roadblocks had shuttered the diplomatic courier hub in Manama, Bahrain. The combined effect of losing the crucial hub and facing local upheaval resulted in Embassy Sanaa developing a perilously large backlog of diplomatic pouches for a post in a precarious security situation. Many Embassy Sanaa staff had been withdrawn, and the deepening nature of the difficulty was clear in travel warnings that the security threat level in Yemen was extremely high due to terrorist activities and civil unrest.

Couriers were tasked to bring order out of transitional chaos by building a duplicate Middle East transport system that would step in for the Manama hub. Their first task was to establish a safe route for pouches out of Yemen; and they were successful in clearing Sanaa of its entire backlog of classified material in one flight, just as the post began discussing the potential need for evacuation of its personnel. Within a month, they had the full Middle East delivery system up and operating.

As the Yemen uprising hardened, the job became tougher. With events becoming even more dire, Diplomatic Courier Shane Morris heroically put together a last-minute mission for a diplomatic courier aboard a military flight to Embassy Sanaa when all commercial air traffic to Yemen was cancelled due to fighting in the capital. Cited for having “pioneered classified deliveries throughout the Middle East and Persian Gulf from Frankfurt during a period of historic unrest,” Morris became the Diplomatic Courier of the Year, and the first woman to be so recognized in the nearly century-long history of the courier service.

Courier Morris said, “The reason the Manama hub exists is that the region is so difficult to service from anywhere else. Replacing it overnight was new for me and new for the Courier Service. Normally we have time to slowly make careful decisions and to prepare posts. This had to happen immediately, so there was quite a bit of a challenge.” She added, “The Courier Service is full of Renaissance people – people who can do anything and will do anything to help out. They deal with everyone from ground crews to ambassadors, everything from forklifts to business class lounges, and it makes for a really great team.”
Maintaining a Secure Workforce

Diplomatic Security completed 34,000 background security clearance investigations for government personnel in an average of 70 days during 2011, four days better than the White House mandate and significantly faster than the federal community at large. In addition, DS cleared two Deputy Secretaries of State, completing both security investigations within one week's time.

DS security infrastructure experts also routinely provide introductory security briefings to all newly hired employees and every new RSO class, as well as security awareness briefings to over 6,800 employees. In addition, the DS Bureau:

- cleared 6,000 support personnel in an average of 37 days, in conjunction with the Department’s critical Iraq transition process.
- processed over 9,000 contractor personnel for personnel security clearances and Moderate Risk Public Trust determinations, an increase of almost 3,300 over 2010.
- reviewed and approved 21,811 visit authorization requests for contractor personnel performing on behalf of critical State Department efforts, establishing need-to-know eligibility for contractor employees to access classified Department information.
- provided periodic security reviews in all accredited Department facilities, including 18 overseas Sensitive Compartmented Information locations.

As circumstances require, Diplomatic Security agents conduct professional responsibility investigations relating to alleged employee misconduct and security clearance eligibility, and investigate unauthorized disclosure and compromise of classified and sensitive information involving Department employees, contractors, local employed staff, and all U.S. government personnel under Chief of Mission authority.

Counteracting Cyber Threats

Using global operational cyber security capabilities, DS computer experts served as leaders of the Department’s WikiLeaks Mitigation Team, helping coordinate and document the Department’s compliance with new federal requirements protecting classified information and systems.

Meanwhile, DS computer security specialists provided briefings to over 6,300 Department and other U.S. government personnel overseas concerning sophisticated cyber threats that jeopardize sensitive information and information technology assets. Since 2010, expert teams have briefed personnel in Russia, the Czech Republic, South Africa, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Afghanistan, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Vietnam, and Thailand, as well as United Nations and NATO staff.

The White House Cyber Security Coordinator assisted in presenting the 2011 National Cybersecurity Innovation award to the DS Cyber Threat Analysis Division team of cyber intelligence and security analysts, at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. The award recognized the ingenuity and creative teamwork of DS in combating malicious network security incidents, and its successful strategic investments in people and security tools to cultivate a culture of collaboration and innovation.

In order to fully protect the Department’s global network of Information Technology systems and information assets, Diplomatic Security is in the process of modernizing its Cyber Security Operations Center, upgrading core elements of the Department’s cyber defense program to make it the premier cyber security operations facility among civilian U.S. agencies. Aside from enhancing full-time network monitoring equipment, this modernization initiative will bolster the ability of DS to detect, react, and successfully combat malicious network activity, and to respond swiftly to network threats affecting other U.S. government agencies.
DS is a leader in the field of physical security, especially as it applies to expeditionary protection overseas. Major strides have been made in anti-ram and blast-mitigation programs. Full-scale load-bearing masonry blast tests were conducted to demonstrate the benefits of whole building retro-fit technology against live explosives.

Through its anti-ram research, DS developed barriers that can absorb full-speed impact from a medium-duty truck while blending into the environment. DS designed and tested anti-ram lamp posts, bus shelters, benches, retaining walls, and boulders, optimizing these for urban conditions.

Other recent design advances in blast-resistant perimeter systems, as well as safe havens and bunkers, will prove beneficial to U.S. diplomatic missions in hostile environments.
Preventing Travel Document Crime

DS special agents investigate passport and visa fraud throughout the United States. In 2011, DS opened 3,969 domestic cases involving visa or passport fraud. It closed 4,556 domestic cases, which included cases opened in previous years. And 1,073 domestic arrests were made for visa or passport fraud.

Diplomatic Security also has 100 Assistant Regional Security Officer-Investigators (ARSO-I) at 90 overseas posts in 63 countries, whose work resulted in substantially more arrests of visa and passport fraud-related suspects, refusals and revocations of visas, and denials of U.S. passports and Consular Reports of Birth Abroad to non-U.S. citizen applicants than during the previous year. These investigations led to numerous arrests in a Colombia-based visa fraud ring; and to arrests in the Dominican Republic of two Major League baseball talent scouts, a league investigator, and a league pitcher who had been using an assumed identity and fraudulent visa since 1999.

DS agents oversee a myriad of criminal investigations involving federal document fraud and other illegal activities. During 2011, DS agents and analysts aggressively investigated over 1,000 cases involving document fraud, malfeasance, and threats of a counterintelligence nature, working closely with other Department bureaus and federal law enforcement agencies.

DS created a new Human Trafficking Unit (HTU) in 2011. Charged with investigating allegations of trafficking in persons with a nexus to passport or visa fraud crimes, it is now the Department’s primary investigative entity for human trafficking-related offenses. In a major success, the unit secured an indictment against a woman and her husband for visa fraud, forced labor, false statements, and harboring aliens.
Other significant DS criminal investigations included:

- Owners of a Massachusetts electronics company were sentenced to 12 years in prison and fined $15.5 million for exporting U.S. military equipment to China. The owners were in the United States on H-1B and L-1 work visas.

- An Atlanta attorney and his employee were sentenced to prison for conspiring to harbor aliens by submitting fraudulent worker visa applications.

- Two dozen targets of a joint federal investigation were indicted in Detroit for their roles in a large-scale health care and drug distribution scheme involving over $58 million in fraudulent billing to Medicare and Medicaid. DS became involved when investigators learned that some of the targets were in the United States on H-1B work visas.

- A DS-led multi-year operation targeting organized crime in New York City resulted in arrests of 27 individuals on charges of visa fraud, marriage fraud, racketeering, and extortion.

Field Office Efforts Against Fraud, Smuggling, and Scams

Eight regional DS Field Offices across the United States — together with DS Resident and Satellite Offices, and in close coordination with DS headquarters — regularly conduct a large number of federal investigations, arrests, and prosecutions of individuals responsible for a wide range of criminal activities.

- **Los Angeles** — received over 1,000 suspected criminal case referrals for investigation

- **Houston** — worked 735 cases and closed 520 (a 70 percent closure rate); 13 of 35 arrests were accepted for prosecution

- **Miami** — closed over 700 cases and arrested over 200 suspects

- **New York City** — closed 786 passport and visa fraud investigations, executed 228 arrests, and gained 70 criminal convictions

- **Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C.** — executed 309 passport and visa fraud arrests, combined
**NOTABLE SUCCESSES FROM THE FIELD**

**Document and identity fraud**

- **Boston:** As the result of a DS investigation, a federal jury convicted a Russian national of fraudulently receiving a U.S. passport, social security card, mortgage, and federally subsidized student loans. He was sentenced to four years in prison and restitution.

- **St. Louis:** DS investigated an individual whose labor-leasing company is among the nation’s top employers of foreign workers; he was arrested and pled guilty to visa fraud, forfeiting all profits from the scheme.

- **Houston:** A DS investigation led to identification of 1,461 fraudulent worker visa applications, with arrests of two ringleaders, and a judgment of over $1 million.

- **Miami:** DS investigated an individual running a document vending ring out of his prison cell in Puerto Rico, who was receiving cash payments of up to $10,000 for each fraudulent document packet. DS arrested four co-conspirators, with a fifth arrest of the ringleader pending his release from jail.

- **Washington, D.C.:** Operation Salamander, begun in 2010, is a federal, state, and local investigation targeting a Virginia document vendor who provided illegal immigrants with valid identity documents based on false identities. The vendor and five co-conspirators were apprehended, with an additional 100 prosecutable individuals still under investigation.

**Seattle:** A DS investigation resulted in the arrest and sentencing of an Alaska police officer who had kept his true identity hidden for 22 years. He pled guilty to federal charges of passport fraud and false claim to U.S. citizenship.

**Smuggling of people and narcotics**

- **Miami:** Operation Cheerleaders involved human smuggling out of Colombia, with aliens posing as cheerleaders paying up to $15,000 to be smuggled into the U.S. for competitions around the country. All subjects either pled guilty or were found guilty by a jury, and deported back to their home countries.

- **New York City:** Operation Dancing Brides was a joint federal investigation into a criminal enterprise responsible for trafficking in Eastern European females, who entered the United States on student visas and often ended up in Mafia-connected adult entertainment jobs or in sham marriages with U.S. citizens in order to obtain immigration benefits. The two-year investigation culminated in 31 arrests.

- **San Francisco:** DS obtained its first search warrant for Facebook content, in a case that ultimately led to the arrest of a U.S. citizen who had been a major international drug smuggler in the 1970s and 1980s. Information derived as a result of the search warrant on the family’s Facebook accounts proved to be the key to cracking the case involving passport fraud and identity theft offenses.

**Border security violations**

- **Los Angeles:** DS investigative activity at the California/Mexico border continued to successfully support the Border Security Initiative, especially in the San Diego area, for a third consecutive year. Continued collaboration between DS, Customs and Border Protection, and the U.S. Attorney’s Office resulted in a staggering one-quarter of all DS arrests over the past three years.

**Financial scams**

- **Denver:** DS agents investigated a criminal group in Florida that bilked U.S. citizens out of more than $30 million through online auction scams. A Romanian national was arrested and pled guilty to financial crimes, leading to profit-forfeiture and deportation proceedings.

**Gang activity**

- **Chicago:** Operation Bloodhound, a large multi-agency investigation, targeted a violent nationwide street gang involved in narcotics, weapon trafficking, homicides, and kidnappings. The gang used passport and identity fraud to further their activities and to avoid prosecution or capture. Chicago agents, augmented by numerous DS agents from other offices, presided over 23 arrests in Illinois on one day alone, and seized multiple vehicles, narcotics, and cash. Several of the targets have been sentenced, with more arrests and sentencing pending.
Locating and Returning Fugitives from Justice

DS special agents coordinated the return of 207 international fugitives to face justice in 2011 – up from 187 a year earlier and 136 two years earlier – as well as 25 domestic fugitives. Working through its Regional Security Offices overseas, and with the U.S. Marshals Service, DS returned fugitives wanted for crimes including sex offenses, homicide, and drug charges. Fugitives were returned from every region of the world, including Cuba and Uganda; while the most fugitives were returned from Mexico, the Philippines, Costa Rica, Belize, and Thailand.

DS international fugitive investigative efforts were featured on two “America’s Most Wanted” television episodes, including the case of Kenneth Craig, wanted in the State of Florida for sexually assaulting two teenage boys in 1998. Craig was believed to be hiding in Brazil for several years and working as a teacher. In June, “America’s Most Wanted” and a Brazilian television show aired the story of Craig’s crimes with his photograph. Shortly afterwards, Craig turned himself in to Brazilian authorities citing pressures originating with the broadcast. Another fugitive featured on the “America’s Most Wanted” Web site was captured through cooperation between the Detroit Resident Office and RSOs in Burma and Thailand, for using a fraudulent passport to evade arrest on charges including assault, aggravated battery, obstruction of justice, and receiving stolen property.

Threat Investigations and Information Coordination

Meanwhile, DS conducted over 300 investigations to detect and deter threats against U.S. government personnel and facilities around the world, as well as against foreign officials and facilities throughout the United States. The bureau completed 236 formal threat assessments, including 56 related to the
Training U.S. Partners

During 2011, DS provided training services to 64 countries through its Office of Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA), including 537 deliveries (training courses, consultations, resources, etc.). ATA training was delivered to almost 8,300 participants by more than 1,300 facilitators. Of 394 courses delivered, 357 of them – more than 90 percent – were presented overseas and 37 of them – less than 10 percent – were delivered within the United States. In all, 11,025 participants received ATA assistance through both training and equipment grants.

Twenty-one courses, consultations, and conferences in cyber security and investigations were provided to 24 partner nations enhancing their ability to detect, prevent, and investigate criminal incidents relating to the use of computers. ATA’s cyber training program also launched a regional traveler’s biometric program, jointly with the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, to assist partner nations in identifying and tracking terrorist suspects crossing their borders.

Among other programs in 2011, ATA completed two training sessions for 29 female Afghan National Police officers, marking delivery of Afghanistan’s first all-female national leadership protection course. This course trained the female officers in weapons handling, protective formations, attack-on-principal scenarios, site advance operations, communications, defensive tactics, and other protective operations. Another ATA milestone was reached in June 2011, when 17 instructors with the Afghan Presidential Protective Service completed ATA instructor-development training and were certified to train officers from various Afghan law enforcement and security agencies. The completion of this course marked a significant step in developing the security service’s self-sufficiency, as well as in building Afghanistan’s capacity to manage its internal security.

In FY 2011, ATA provided Jordanian Police with senior leadership consultations and courses that focused on crisis management, crisis response, and terrorist investigations. This training follows international policing standards and universal human rights criteria, preparing Jordanian police leadership and officers on
the street to use a measured response and exercise restraint when dealing with street protests. From January through the spring, civil unrest broke out in Amman, and ATA-trained personnel employed these principles when addressing the demonstrators. The Government of Jordan has also adopted ATA curriculum into its academies and now conducts counterterrorism-related training for other Persian Gulf countries. In March, ATA completed its project management for the construction of a state-of-the-art, 911-style emergency call center in Amman that now fields thousands of daily emergency assistance calls from Jordanian citizens.

Training U.S. Government Personnel

The DS Training Center (DSTC) regularly provides basic and advanced domestic training to Diplomatic Security employees and other U.S. government personnel headed for assignments in high-threat regions of the world; and the DSTC continued to improve its professional security training facilities, equipment, and materials in 2011.

During the year, 265 DS special agents were certified for positions with U.S. missions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Yemen. DS provided training for Chief of Mission personnel assigned to Iraq, in response to a formal request from the post, that included rollover training for Mine-Resistant Ambush Protection vehicles, familiarization with armored vehicles used by the RSO team in Baghdad, and survival drills. It also included realistic acculturation training by Arabic-speaking role players during simulation missions.

Once again, assessors from other federal law enforcement training academies fully accredited DS training courses for meeting all Federal Law Enforcement Training Accreditation standards. Moreover, the American Public University now awards academic credit to DS Basic Special Agent Class (BSAC) and Security Technical Specialist (STS) course graduates. STS graduates can acquire up to 38 hours of undergraduate credit, and BSAC graduates can earn up to nine hours of graduate credit, toward security degrees. And the U.S. Department of Veteran’s Affairs determined that the BSAC student program meets the test of significant re-training to other skills following military service, thereby qualifying military veterans for a monthly stipend while they are enrolled in BSAC training.
Highly skilled DS intelligence and threat analysts provided timely analytical information to both the public and private sector in 2011. DS special agents served with other U.S. government agencies in assessing current and prospective threats. These included the FBI at 27 of its Joint Terrorism Task Forces; the Department of Homeland Security’s National Operations Center; the National Joint Terrorism Task Force; the White House Situation Room; the Department of Defense’s Joint Task Force for the National Capital Region; the National Security Staff; and the Department of State’s Operations Center.

Critical Analysis and Inter-agency Cooperation

DS draws upon U.S. intelligence assets to help ensure that critical, timely intelligence information and threat assessments are provided to DS decision makers, field personnel, and other State Department bureaus. This includes awareness of global and regional threats and security issues. Throughout 2011, for example, DS analysts taught over a dozen counterterrorism courses at International Law Enforcement Academies (ILEA) located in Budapest, Gaborone, Bangkok, and Lima; and it published its annual report on Political Violence Against Americans 2010.

DS investigative analysts were called upon to support domestic and international special events in 2011, including the G-8 summit in Deauville, France, attended by both the Secretary of State and the President of the United States; the Special Olympics Summer World Games in Athens, Greece; the United
Nations General Assembly opening session in New York City; the Pan American Games in Guadalajara, Mexico; the G-20 Meeting in Paris, France; and the APEC Conference in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Engaging with the Public

The Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) public-private partnership between the Department and 10,000 representatives from U.S. businesses, academic institutions, faith-based institutions, and non-governmental organizations conducted more than 3,000 consultations and published more than 400 analytical reports in 2011, to help these groups operate more safely in challenging security environments overseas. OSAC now supports more than 140 Country Councils worldwide that communicate with U.S. embassy RSOs on a spectrum of regional threats, ranging from terrorist threats to intellectual property theft. OSAC’s 2011 Annual Briefing in Washington, D.C., brought together over 1,000 security professionals to address the concerns of the U.S. private sector operating overseas.

Through the Rewards for Justice (RFJ) program, the Secretary of State offers and pays rewards for information that prevents or successfully resolves acts of international terrorism against U.S. persons or property. Reward offers of up to $25 million have been authorized for information leading to the capture of key terrorist leaders. Since its inception in 1984, RFJ has paid over $100 million to more than 70 persons who provided credible information. In 2011, the RFJ program added four individuals to its list of reward offers including, for the first time, a terrorist financier. Seeking to increase the reach of its counterterrorism message, RFJ formulated and launched an advertising campaign that makes extensive use of Department social media to offer a reward for information on al-Qaida financier Yasin al-Suri. The offer was picked up and disseminated across the internet by bloggers, news Web sites, and social media sites.
25th ANNIVERSARY
BUREAU OF DIPLOMATIC SECURITY
1986-2011